

1.941  
R8P81

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

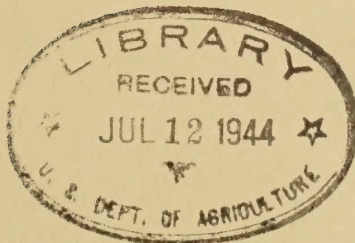
Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
and  
Farm Security Administration

-----  
POPULATION IN FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

*Mich*  
MIGRATORY LABOR CAMPS

Current Report No. 1

An analysis of social and economic characteristics of families registering in FSA Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona from January to April, 1940.



Berkeley, California

August 1, 1940

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

RESEARCH REPORT

THEORY OF THE ELECTRIC  
CONDUCTIVITY OF METALS

BY J. H. VAN VLECK

RECEIVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
LIBRARY ON FEBRUARY 10, 1931  
FROM THE PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

CHICAGO, ILL.

1931

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

CHICAGO, ILL.

POPULATION IN FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

MIGRATORY LABOR CAMPS

Current Report No. 1

Arizona-California Camps  
January-April, 1940

CONTENTS

	Page
Summary . . . . .	1
Size of Camp Population . . . . .	4
Where the Families Came From . . . . .	6
Age Composition and Persons in Labor Market . . . . .	10
Employment in Month Previous to Entering Camp . . . . .	12
Education and Occupational Experience . . . . .	15
Child Labor and School Attendance . . . . .	17
Departures from Camps . . . . .	18





POPULATION IN FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION  
MIGRATORY LABOR CAMPS

Current Report No. 1

Arizona-California Camps  
January - April, 1940

This is the first in a series of reports concerning the social and economic characteristics of agricultural laborer families living in the Farm Security Administration's Migratory Labor Camps in the Western States. These reports are compiled from registration forms filled out for each family entering a camp. Additional information is requested from the families as they leave camp.

The registration form was devised by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Farm Security Administration to afford an indication of the family composition, occupational and residential history, educational status, and migratory movements of the people served by the Migratory Labor Camps. The registration form is very brief and its execution requires only about ten minutes time.

This report is an analysis of registrations in California and Arizona Camps from the first part of January through April, 1940.

SUMMARY

From the first part of January through April, 1940, 2,648 families registered in FSA Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona.<sup>1/</sup> Most of these families were newly arrived migrants from other states. Coming principally from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri, they entered FSA Camps after brief periods of residence in nearby places.

---

<sup>1/</sup> This figure is not corrected for duplications arising from the registration of a single family in two or more camps during the period.





With only a few exceptions, these families were homeless, without any residential base from which they were migrating or to which they expected to return. Families were almost entirely of the white race and family heads were predominantly youthful. The typical family included four or five persons, of whom two were workers, either employed or seeking employment. Almost all adults including women, and nearly half of the teen-age children were seeking employment. Only half of the families, however, had received any employment during the month preceding entry into the camps, and nearly 90 per cent of the available working time of all persons either working or seeking work was unemployed during that month. Very few families had members working at the time they entered the camps and few had been promised work in the camp vicinity. Many children of school age were not attending school.

Only a small proportion of family heads had more than an eighth grade education. The heads of families reported a wide variety of occupational experience. Practically all of them had worked as agricultural laborers; most had been farm operators, and about half of them had worked for considerable periods in nonagricultural industries.

Families departing from camps during the four-month period had stayed in camp slightly less than five weeks on the average. Almost all departing families reported that they were leaving camp to seek employment, but few families had work connections or any definite prospect of receiving the employment which they were leaving the camps to seek. The employment sought during the period here summarized was largely in





the pea and potato harvests and in thinning peaches.

Most of the departing families were going to places not far distant from the camp they were leaving. Only a few families said they were leaving the state in which the camp was located.

While one-fourth of the families entering the camps during the four-month period had come almost directly from other FSA Camps, only a few of those checking out of camps said they expected to reenter FSA Camps at their destinations.



### SIZE OF THE CAMP POPULATION

During the first four months of 1940 the average population in the five camps in northern California<sup>1/</sup> increased from 253 families in January to 395 families in April. In the five camps in the San Joaquin Valley the average monthly population increased from 834 families in January to 917 families in April. Average population in the two Arizona Camps also increased from 204 families in January to 349 families in April. However, in sharp contrast with these three regions, the population of the four camps in the Imperial and Coachella Valleys declined by more than 50 per cent, from an average of 654 families in January to 309 families in April. This exodus occurred even though May is peak month of seasonal labor demand in the Imperial Valley.<sup>2/</sup> The explanation of this exodus of families from the Imperial and Coachella Valley, while the population in other camps was slowly increasing, probably lies to some extent in the seasonal migration pattern of these families and to some extent in the type of agricultural labor required in this valley during April and May.

---

<u>1/ Northern California</u> <u>Camps</u>	<u>San Joaquin Valley</u> <u>Camps</u>	<u>Imperial and</u> <u>Coachella Valley</u>	<u>Arizona</u> <u>Camps</u>
1. Gridley	1. Westley	1. Indio	1. Aqua Fria
2. Yuba City	2. Visalia	2. Mobile #1	2. 11 Mile
3. Winters	3. Mobile #2	3. Brawley	Corner
4. Windsor	Corcoran	4. Mobile #3	
5. Thornton	4. Shafter		
	5. Arvin		

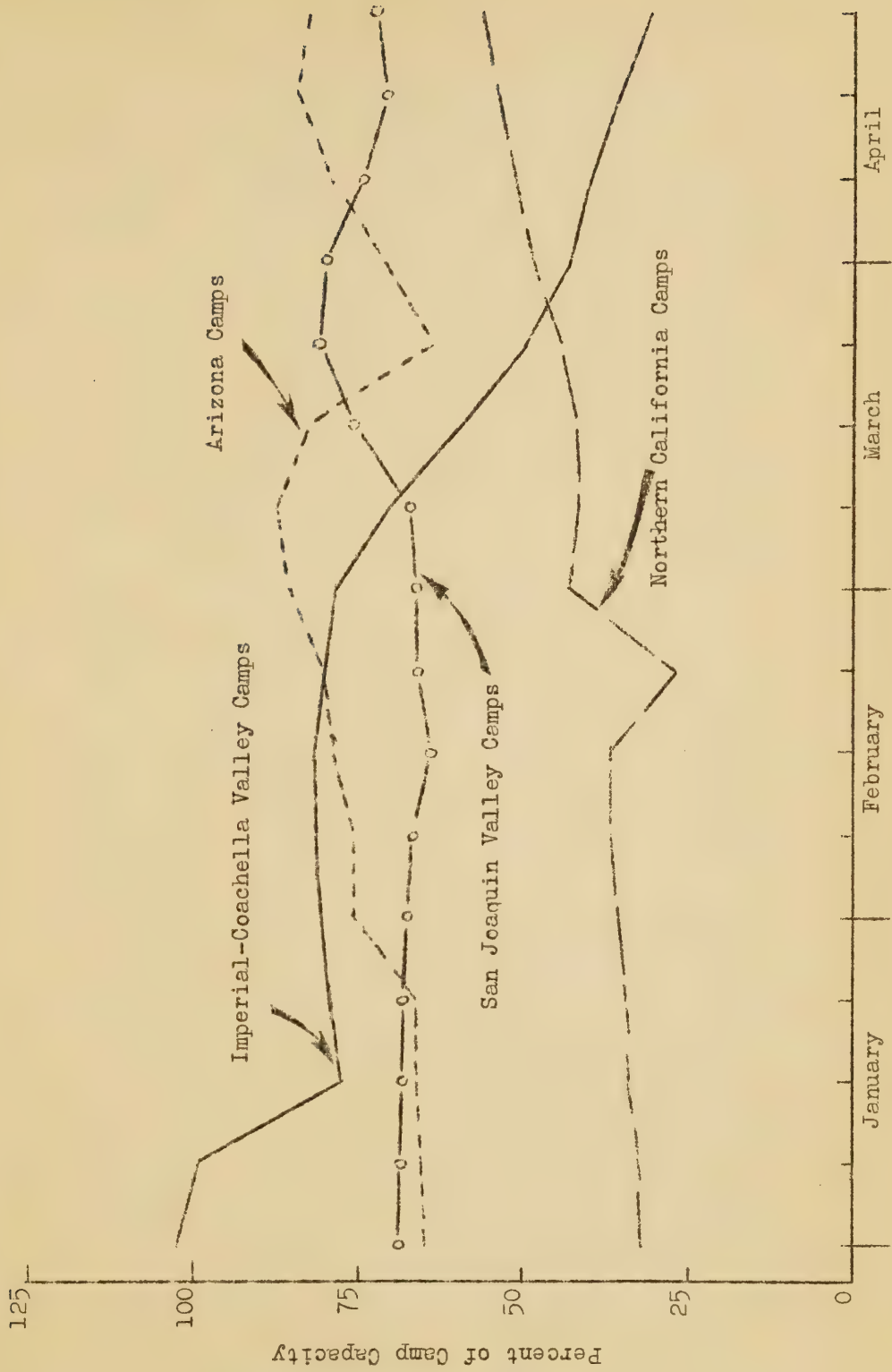
2/ Adams, R. L. Seasonal Labor needs for California Crops - 1936





Chart No. 1

Population in Farm Security Administration Migratory Labor Camps  
in California and Arizona, January - April, 1940, Expressed  
as Percent of Camp Capacity.\*



\*Camp capacity and population expressed in families.





Camp population related to camp capacity in the four regions is graphically shown in Chart 2.

The registration of 2,648 families including 11,370 persons entering FSA Camps during the first four months of 1940, provides information on a greater number of families and persons than the average number in all FSA Camps in California and Arizona during any one of these months. The average number of families in all camps during this period was highest in March when it stood at 2,021 families or 9,101 persons.



### WHERE THE FAMILIES CAME FROM

While some families entered camps directly following a long distance migration, the majority moved into camps from relatively nearby places. Nearly three-fourths of the families entering the 14 camps in California, reported having lived at some place in the state for two weeks or longer immediately before entering camp, 13 per cent reported Arizona as the state of last residence for two weeks or longer and the other 13 per cent had come directly from other states, principally Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri.

In ~~the camps located in~~ the Imperial and Coachella Valley Camps, however, only 45 per cent of the families reported their last residence to have been in California; 36 per cent were previously in Arizona and 18 per cent in other states. In the camps located in northern California 88 per cent of the families last resided for at least two weeks in California and only 3 per cent came directly from Arizona. Only 11 per cent of the 345 families entering Arizona camps reported California as the state of last residence; 70 per cent were last in Arizona, and 19 per cent in other states (Table 1). Most of the families going from California to Arizona were from Imperial County.

Of the families entering the San Joaquin Valley camps, a large portion had recently resided in the counties adjacent to the camps. Another large portion was made up of those moving northward from the Imperial Valley. Northern California camps drew their population from a wider area. Nevertheless, the tendency for families to move into











camps from relatively short distances remained evident in this region, and in general was true as well for the camps in Arizona (Table 2).

One-fourth of the families entering camps in California came directly from other FSA Camps. A slightly smaller proportion had lived previously in private camps of farmers. Fifteen per cent of the families had been living in roadside (squatter) camps, 12 per cent in auto camps, 16 per cent in houses which they rented, and only 8 families reported that they were in homes which they owned. More than half the families living in Arizona before entering FSA Camps were in the private camps of farmers, and 20 per cent were in roadside camps. (Table 3).

The location of these families immediately before coming into FSA Camps does not by any means represent their permanent, usual, or long time residence.

More than four-fifths of them had migrated to Arizona and California since the beginning of 1939. In answer to the question as to the last state in which they had lived for one year or more prior to arrival in the state where the camp was located, more than a third of the families said that state was Oklahoma; an additional 30 per cent indicated the three states of Texas, Arkansas and Missouri. In addition to these more than a score of other states were indicated, of which the most frequently mentioned were Kansas, Washington, Oregon and Colorado in the order named.

The families were also asked if they had "a place or residence



Table 2.

Families Entering F.S.A. Migratory Labor Camps in California  
and Arizona During January-April, 1940 Classified by Their  
Residence of Two Weeks or More in California and Arizona  
Counties Just Before Entering Camps.

County of Residence:		Camp of Registration									
in California and :		Total :	San Joaquin :	Northern :	Imperial :						
Arizona Just Before:			Valley :	California :	Valley :	Arizona					
Entering Camp.		No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :	No. : Pct. :
Total California	:	1,740: 100.0:	858 : 100.0 :	578 : 100.0 :	265: 100.0:	39 : 100.0	:	:	:	:	:
Counties:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Fresno	:	46: 2.6:	27 : 3.2 :	15 : 2.4 :	4: 1.5:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Imperial	:	487: 28.0:	289 : 33.7 :	49 : 8.5:	128: 48.3:	21 : 53.8	:	:	:	:	:
Kern	:	233: 13.4:	151 : 17.6 :	49 : 8.5:	26: 9.8:	7 : 17.9	:	:	:	:	:
Los Angeles	:	47: 2.7:	38 : 4.4 :	4 : .7:	4: 1.5:	1 : 2.6	:	:	:	:	:
Madera	:	35: 2.0:	16 : 1.9 :	13 : 2.3:	6: 2.3:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Riverside	:	140: 8.0:	70 : 8.2 :	19 : 3.3:	46: 17.4:	5 : 12.8	:	:	:	:	:
San Joaquin	:	48: 2.8:	10 : 1.2 :	37 : 6.4:	1: 0.4:	:	:	:	:	:	:
San Luis Obispo	:	35: 2.0:	29 : 3.4 :	6 : 1.0:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Sutter	:	36: 2.1:	1 : 0.1 :	35 : 6.1:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Stanislaus	:	35: 2.0:	14 : 1.6 :	20 : 3.4:	:	1 : 2.6	:	:	:	:	:
Tulare	:	181: 10.4:	90 : 10.5 :	65 : 11.2:	24: 9.0:	2 : 5.1	:	:	:	:	:
Yuba	:	147: 8.5:	7 : 0.8 :	138 : 23.9:	2: 0.7:	:	:	:	:	:	:
All other	:	270: 15.5:	116 : 13.4 :	128 : 22.3:	24: 9.1:	2 : 5.2	:	:	:	:	:
Total Arizona	:	534: 100.0:	66 : 100.0 :	18 : 100.0 :	209: 100.0:	241: 100.0	:	:	:	:	:
Counties:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Maricopa	:	311: 58.2:	54 : 81.8 :	16 : 88.9:	137: 65.6:	104: 43.2	:	:	:	:	:
Pinal	:	184: 34.5:	5 : 7.6 :	- : - :	54: 25.8:	125: 51.9	:	:	:	:	:
Yuma	:	15: 2.8:	4 : 6.1 :	- : - :	9: 4.3:	2: 0.8	:	:	:	:	:
All other	:	24: 4.5:	3 : 4.5 :	2 : 11.1:	9: 4.3:	10: 4.1	:	:	:	:	:





Table 3.

Families Entering F.S.A. Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona During January-April, 1940, Classified by Their Counties of Residence in California and Arizona for two Weeks or More Just Before Entering Camps and by Type of Housing Occupied in These Counties.

## Type of Housing Occupied

County of Residence in California and Arizona before entering camp	Total		Auto Camp		F.S.A. Camp		Grower Camp		Roadside Camp		Rented House		Others	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
California Total	1,740	100.0	211	12.1	466	26.8	383	22.3	267	15.3	285	16.4	123	7.1
Counties:														
Fresno	46	100.0	3	6.5			15	32.6	8	17.4	14	30.4	6	13.1
Imperial	487	100.0	57	11.7	176	36.1	124	25.5	84	17.3	30	6.2	16	3.2
Kern	233	100.0	36	15.5	67	28.7	54	23.2	25	10.7	37	15.9	14	6.0
Los Angeles	47	100.0	8	17.0			7	14.9	3	6.4	23	48.9	6	12.8
Riverside	140	100.0	11	7.9	63	45.0	14	10.0	20	14.3	25	17.8	7	5.0
San Joaquin	48	100.0	5	10.4	4	8.3	20	41.7	4	8.3	8	16.7	7	14.6
Tulare	181	100.0	28	15.5	61	33.7	32	17.7	8	4.4	45	24.9	7	3.8
Yuba	147	100.0	7	4.8	65	44.2	8	5.4	39	26.5	23	15.6	5	3.5
All others	411	100.0	56	13.6	30	7.3	114	27.7	76	18.5	80	19.5	55	13.4
Arizona Total	534	100.0	50	9.4	33	6.2	276	51.6	102	19.1	48	9.0	25	4.7
Counties														
Maricopa	311	100.0	44	14.2	33	10.6	136	43.8	46	14.8	34	10.9	18	5.7
Pinal	184	100.0	4	2.2	-	-	122	66.3	48	26.1	6	3.3	4	2.1
Yuma	15	100.0	2	13.3	-	-	4	26.7	5	33.3	4	26.7	-	-
All others	24	100.0	-	-	-	-	14	58.3	3	12.5	4	16.7	3	12.5



in any place or town to which they expected to return." This question incorporates an operational definition of a "home"; that is, was there a place which might be considered as a base from which the family migrated to find employment and to which they returned. More than two-thirds of the families said they had no such "place."

Of the 853 families who said that there was a place to which they expected to return, about a third said this "home" was in Oklahoma; Texas was indicated by a fifth of the families but only 12 per cent of these families reported such a place in California, and but 3 per cent indicated one in Arizona (Table 4).

Even in the terms in which this question was asked, the replies expressing expectation to return to this "home" or base of operations, when analysed became not a matter of clear intention but in most cases an expression of sentiment, of desire or of hope. Of 270 families who said they expected to return to Oklahoma considerably less than half believed they would do so within a year; nearly a third had not been there at all during the preceding twelve months, and only 30 per cent of those with "homes" in Oklahoma had been there for more than eight months during the preceding year. Only fourteen of the 270 families said they owned a house in Oklahoma. Substantially, the same answers were given by the families reporting their "homes" in Texas, Missouri, Kansas and New Mexico.

However, those families which reported "homes" in California gave evidence that such "homes" were actually serving as bases for





Table 4.

Families Entering F.S.A. Migratory Labor Camps in California  
and Arizona During January-April, 1940, Classified by "Home"  
State and by Camps of Registration.

Home State	Camps of Registration									
	All	Northern	San Joaquin	Imperial	and	Arizona				
	Camps	California	Valley	Cochella	Camps					
	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:	No. : Pct.:
Total	: 2,648: 100.0:	656 : 100.0:	1,063: 100.0:	584 : 100.0:	345 : 100.0:					
No Home State	: 1,795: 67.8:	545 : 83.1:	777: 73.1:	324 : 55.5:	149 : 43.2:					
California	: 102: 3.9:	34 : 5.2:	33: 3.1:	29 : 5.0:	6 : 1.7:					
Arizona	: 23: 0.9:	5 : 0.8:	4: 0.4:	12 : 2.1:	2 : 0.6:					
Oklahoma	: 270: 10.2:	10 : 1.5:	101: 9.5:	70 : 12.0:	89 : 25.8:					
Texas	: 176: 6.6:	11 : 1.7:	37: 3.5:	70 : 12.0:	58 : 16.8:					
Arkansas	: 61: 2.3:	5 : 0.8:	26: 2.5:	15 : 2.6:	15 : 4.3:					
Missouri	: 25: 0.9:	8 : 1.2:	9: 0.8:	6 : 1.0:	2 : 0.6:					
Washington	: 25: 0.9:	8 : 1.2:	11: 1.0:	4 : 0.7:	2 : 0.6:					
Oregon	: 26: 1.0:	6 : 0.9:	12: 1.1:	7 : 1.2:	1 : 0.3:					
New Mexico	: 17: 0.6:	2 : 0.3:	6: 0.6:	6 : 1.0:	3 : 0.9:					
Colorado	: 15: 0.6:	6 : 0.9:	3: 0.3:	5 : 0.8:	1 : 0.3:					
Kansas	: 21: 0.8:	3 : 0.4:	9: 0.8:	6 : 1.0:	3 : 0.9:					
Other	: 92: 3.5:	13 : 2.0:	35: 3.3:	30 : 5.1:	14 : 4.0:					



Table 5.

Families Entering F.S.A. Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona During January-April, 1940, Classified by Period of Time in the Past Year Lived in "Home" States, by Families Expecting to Return There During the Next 12 Months, and by House Ownership There.

Home State	Number of Weeks There Past 12 Months										Expect to Return:		
	All Camps	None	1 - 10	11 - 30	31 - 52	to Home State		During Next 12 Months		Owned There			
	No. : Pet. :	No. : Pet. :	No. : Pet. :	No. : Pet. :	No. : Pet. :	No. :	Pet. :	No. :	Pet. :	No. :	Pet. :	No. :	Pet. :
No. Having "Home" State:	853 : 100.0 :	259 : 30.4 :	101 : 11.9 :	254 : 29.8 :	239 : 27.9 :	415 :	:	415 :	48.7 :	54 :	6.3 :	:	:
Oklahoma	270 : 100.0 :	74 : 27.3 :	32 : 11.9 :	75 : 27.8 :	89 : 33.0 :	106 :	:	106 :	39.3 :	14 :	5.2 :	:	:
Texas	176 : 100.0 :	60 : 34.1 :	20 : 11.3 :	41 : 23.3 :	55 : 31.3 :	53 :	:	53 :	30.1 :	3 :	1.7 :	:	:
California	102 : 100.0 :	5 : 4.9 :	16 : 15.7 :	53 : 51.9 :	28 : 27.5 :	90 :	:	90 :	88.2 :	14 :	13.7 :	:	:
Arkansas	61 : 100.0 :	30 : 49.2 :	3 : 4.9 :	10 : 16.3 :	18 : 29.6 :	31 :	:	31 :	50.8 :	4 :	6.6 :	:	:
Oregon	26 : 100.0 :	7 : 26.9 :	4 : 15.4 :	11 : 42.5 :	4 : 15.2 :	22 :	:	22 :	34.6 :	1 :	3.8 :	:	:
Missouri	25 : 100.0 :	14 : 56.0 :	1 : 4.0 :	6 : 24.0 :	4 : 16.0 :	9 :	:	9 :	36.0 :	3 :	12.0 :	:	:
Washington	25 : 100.0 :	3 : 12.0 :	6 : 24.0 :	9 : 36.0 :	7 : 28.0 :	20 :	:	20 :	80.0 :	2 :	8.0 :	:	:
Arizona	23 : 100.0 :	4 : 17.5 :	4 : 17.3 :	8 : 34.8 :	7 : 30.4 :	11 :	:	11 :	47.8 :	- :	- :	:	:
Kansas	21 : 100.0 :	16 : 76.1 :	2 : 9.5 :	2 : 9.6 :	1 : 4.8 :	8 :	:	8 :	33.1 :	1 :	4.8 :	:	:
Other	124 : 100.0 :	46 : 37.1 :	13 : 10.5 :	39 : 31.4 :	26 : 21.0 :	65 :	:	65 :	52.4 :	12 :	9.7 :	:	:





relatively short migrations. Of the 102 families who said they expected to return to a "place" in California, only 5 per cent had not lived in that place during the past year and 88 per cent of them expected to return there within the next twelve months. Fourteen per cent of these families states that they owned houses in California. These 102 families reported "homes" in 27 counties of California; a fourth of them in communities with populations between five and ten thousand people.

More families expected to return to their "homes" in Oregon and Washington within the next year than was the case in any of the other states besides California (Table 5).

The extensive recent migrations described above entailed the operation and the maintainance of motor vehicles. At the time of their registration only 12 per cent of the heads of families did not possess cars, but had come into the camps in the vehicles of relatives or friends. Nearly 60 per cent of the motor vehicles of registering families were over 10 years old, and only 6 per cent of them had been manufactured in 1937 or thereafter.



### AGE COMPOSITION AND PERSONS IN LABOR MARKET

The families registering in FSA Camps during the period under consideration constitute a youthful group of people, with numerous children and relatively few old persons. Nearly half of the 11,370 persons in these families were less than 19 years of age and only 6 per cent of the total number were more than 50 years old (Table 6). The youthful character of these families is further reflected in the ages of the family heads, 35 per cent of whom were less than thirty years of age, 62 per cent under forty and less than 9 per cent over 55 years of age.

Thirty of the families registered were unattached individuals; all the rest consisted of two or more persons with an average of 4.3 persons per family.

A series of questions on the registration form are designed to establish which persons are workers. These include questions as to which family members are working at time of entering camp, which are promised work, and what others are available for and seeking employment. The total of persons in these several categories, excluding any duplications, is considered to be the number of working members in the family. On this basis, the 2,648 families included an available labor supply of 5,574 persons--a number significantly high in view of the fact that nearly half of all persons were less than 19 years of age. The average family had 2.1 persons actively in the labor market.





Children 12 years of age and under were only one-half of one per cent of all workers actively in the labor market, but children between the ages of 13 and 18 years constituted 14 per cent of the working population. More than half of the working members of these families were between 19 and 39 years of age. Approximately 80 per cent of all persons from 19 to 60 years of age were reported as being actively in the labor market (Chart 7).



Table 6

All Persons Entering Farm Security Administration Migratory Labor Camps  
January-April, 1940, Classified by Ages, and the Number in Each Age  
Group who Worked in the 30 Days Preceding Entry into Camp and the  
Number Working and Seeking Work at Time of Registration.

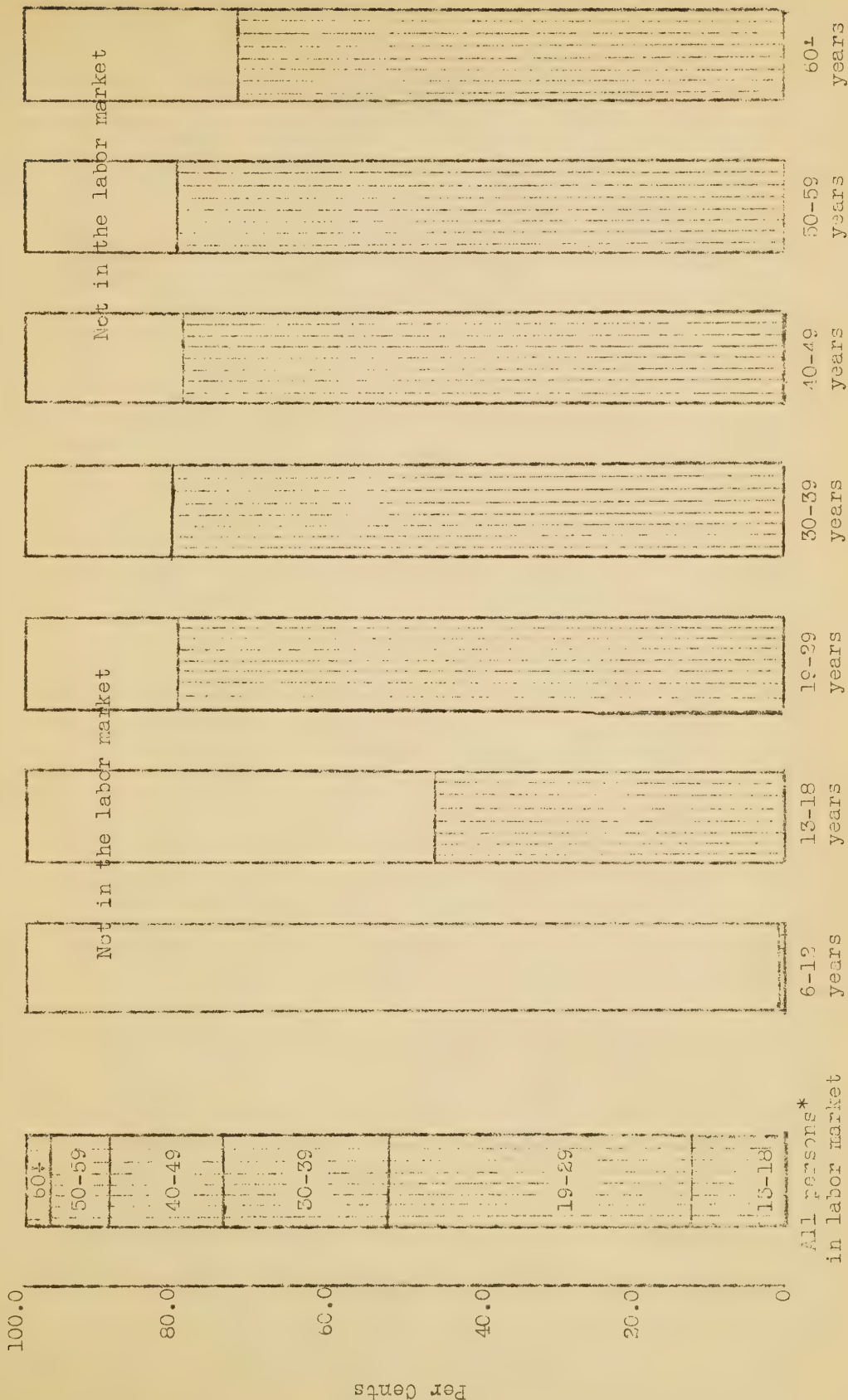
Age Group	: Number :		: No. of Persons :		: Average Number :		: Number Working :		: Number Seeking :		: Total in	
	Persons	Per Cent	Worked Past 30 Days	Per Cent	Past 30 Days	Per Cent	At Time of Registration	Per Cent	Work	Per Cent	Labor Market*	Per Cent
All Ages	11,370	100.0	2,344	20.6	7.5	2.1	5,334	46.9	5,574	49.0		
Under 6 Years	1,764	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
6-12 Years	1,986	100.0	5	0.3	10.0	-	25	1.3	25	1.3		
13-18 Years	1,635	100.0	292	17.9	7.2	2.2	718	43.9	754	46.1		
19-29 Years	2,699	100.0	886	32.8	7.2	3.7	2,047	75.8	2,147	79.5		
30-39 Years	1,527	100.0	531	34.8	7.9	3.5	1,197	78.4	1,250	81.9		
40-49 Years	1,048	100.0	390	37.2	7.5	3.5	801	76.4	833	79.9		
50-59 Years	554	100.0	197	35.6	7.6	2.4	430	77.6	443	80.0		
Over 60 Years	157	100.0	43	27.4	7.6	0.6	116	73.9	117	74.5		

\* Addition of number "working now" and number "seeking work."



Chart No. 2.

Age distribution of persons actively in the labor market, members of families entering FSA  
Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona  
January - April, 1940



\* 6-12 = .5 per cent





### EMPLOYMENT IN MONTH PREVIOUS TO ENTERING CAMP

As the families included in this analysis entered the camps in the four months from January through April, 1940, their employment experience reported for the month prior to their entry into the camps, will, for some families be in December, 1939 while for others largely in April, 1940. However, there were no significant differences in the amount of work received in the month prior to camp registration between those families entering camps in January and those registering in the latter part of April. Nor, were there material differences in the amounts of employment received by the families entering the camps in one section of the two states from that reported by families entering camps in another region. Therefore, the following discussion of employment experience during the 30 days before entering camps will be described for the 2,648 families without differentiation by date of registration, by FSA Camp location or by place of last residence.

Only 52 per cent of all the families reported receiving any employment in the month preceding their entry into the FSA Camps. The families that did work in this period reported an average of less than two persons per family working, and the average number of days worked was 7.5 days per employed persons or about 13 days work per family reporting work. <sup>1/</sup>

---

<sup>1/</sup> Days work as used here means a day on which any work was received.



The ages of persons reported as working in the month preceding camp registration closely conforms to the age composition reported above for all persons actively in the labor market. Persons under 19 years of age make up 14 per cent of all persons reported as actively in the labor market, and 13 per cent of all persons reported as working in this month. Persons between 19 and 39 were 51 per cent of the total labor force available from all families, and in the month preceding registration 52 per cent of the persons working were between these ages.

While slightly more than half of all families reported finding some employment in this month, this is by no means a complete index to the incidence of unemployment among the families during this month. For every one person who found any employment in this period, there were 1.4 persons actively in the labor market who found none at all.

If it is assumed that there are 25 working days per month, the 5,574 persons available for work offer a total of 139,450 man-days per month available for employment. The amount of employment received represents a utilization of only 13 per cent of the available man-days during this period.

The extent to which available man-days were utilized according to the registration records, is in close agreement with the employment received by families while actually residing in FSA Migratory Labor





Camps during the four months from January-April, 1940. <sup>1/</sup>

Among the 52 per cent of the families reporting some employment in these months, the amount of employment received was by no means evenly distributed. The amount of work received per family varied directly with the number of persons working. Families having one worker employed in this month were 56 per cent of all families reporting employment but these families received only 33 per cent of the days of employment. Those families with 4 members employed constituted 5 per cent of all reporting but they received 11 per cent of the days of employment (Table 7).

In summary, 23 per cent of all the families registering in these four months received 67 per cent of the employment reported for all families for the month preceding entry into camp; almost half of the families were not employed at all, and the employment index in terms of aggregate man-days available for all families registering over the four month period stood at 13 per cent.

Only 9 per cent of the families reported an employed member at the time they registered in the camps; 13 per cent of the families indicated that they had been promised work in the locality of the camp into which they were entering. The remainder, 78 per cent, came to the camps with no more than a hope that they would be able to find work.

---

<sup>1/</sup> See Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Farm Security Administration, Employment Situation of Agricultural Workers Living in FSA Migratory Labor Camps. Current Reports for January, March and April. Mimeographed.



Table 7

Families Entering F. S. A. Migratory Labor Camps in California  
and Arizona During January-April, 1940, Classified by  
Distribution of the Work Received During the  
Month Preceding Entry Into Camps.

Number of Workers Per Family	: Number of :		: Number of :		: Average :		: Average :	
	: Families :		: Days :		: Days Per :		: Days :	
	: Reporting Work :		: Days :		: Person :		: Per :	
	: Past 30 Days :		: Worked :		: Working :		: Family :	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
All Families 2,648	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Families Reporting	1,383	100.0	17,519	100.0	7.5	12.7		
Families with 1 working	774	55.6	5,745	32.6	7.4	7.4		
Families with 2 working	387	27.8	5,784	32.9	7.5	15.0		
Families with 3 working	128	9.4	2,853	16.4	7.4	22.2		
Families with 4 working	70	5.1	1,944	11.0	6.9	27.6		
Families with 5 working	16	1.1	718	4.2	9.0	45.0		
Families with 6 working	4	.5	132	.8	5.5	33.0		
Families with 7 working	4	.5	343	2.1	12.3	86.1		



## EDUCATION AND OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Half of the heads of families registering in FSA camps had not reached the eighth grade in school, and only 3 per cent had completed high school. Differences from these total averages are found within the several age groups. Of the heads of families less than 30 years of age, approximately 43 per cent had not reached the eighth grade--among those 60 years of age and over, 61 per cent had not achieved this grade. One per cent of the family heads had attended college.

The family heads reported a wide range of previous occupational experience. As might be expected, 95 per cent of them stated that they had worked as agricultural laborers. The average length of time in this occupation was over 5 years. <sup>1/</sup> The average number of years during which family heads had worked as agricultural laborers ranged from two and a half years for those who were less than 20 years of age, to more than eight years reported by those over 65.

Approximately 28 per cent of all family heads reported that they had been farm owners during some time in their lives, and the average length of farm ownership was 9 years. More than half of those over 50 years of age reported themselves as having been farm owners for an average period of 12 years.

A higher proportion of the heads of families indicated that they had been tenant farmers than was true of any other occupational

---

<sup>1/</sup> A year's experience as used here means a year during which this occupation was followed for any extensive period of time.





category; 51 per cent of all families reported this occupation and more than 70 per cent of all family heads 45 years of age and over had been tenant farmers. The average period of tenant farming for all families was more than 9 years.

It is a popular impression that the families in FSA Camps are exclusively "agricultural" or "farming" people. Yet, half of the heads of families registering in camps during this four-month period had had nonagricultural experience, and the average years of this experience was slightly less than seven. The number of years of nonagricultural experience increased steadily with the age of the family head reporting. For those 50 years of age and over, the average was almost 11 years of nonagricultural experience (Table 8).

The 1,313 families who reported having nonagricultural occupational experience had been mainly skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers in about equal proportions although some had been professional persons, entrepreneurs or clerks (Table 13). The years of experience in nonagricultural industries demonstrates that this work was in most cases of considerable duration, for example, 86 per cent of the skilled workers reported working at skilled occupations for more than two years. (Table 9).



Table 8

Families Entering F. S. A. Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona  
During January-April, 1940, Classified by Age of Family Head and  
by Years of Occupational Experience

Age of Head	Agricultural Laborer		Farm Owner		Farm Renter		Share Cropper		Nonagric. Experience		
	Total	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	Percent Ave. yrs. 2/ of Age	
	Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	Occupation: Group	
Total	2,648 <sup>2/</sup>	94.6	5.3	28.2	9.1	50.8	9.4	40.7	6.0	49.6	6.7
Less than 20	35	97.1	2.5	14.3	2.5	22.9	4.0	17.1	5.8	25.7	1.8
20 - 24	338	93.8	3.5	8.8	4.1	20.9	3.9	19.1	4.1	39.9	2.3
25 - 29	472	93.0	4.8	18.0	6.2	34.3	5.2	35.0	4.3	47.7	4.2
30 - 34	393	94.7	5.1	19.6	5.8	48.1	5.9	39.4	5.5	55.2	5.7
35 - 39	357	94.4	5.0	30.0	9.4	60.5	8.4	45.4	5.6	53.8	6.8
40 - 44	339	97.3	6.3	38.9	7.8	64.0	10.0	52.5	6.3	52.8	8.4
45 - 49	242	92.6	6.3	39.3	8.0	73.6	11.9	50.4	6.7	50.4	8.5
50 - 54	191	97.9	6.2	45.0	9.1	72.3	13.2	47.1	8.7	50.3	11.3
55 - 59	135	95.6	6.5	50.4	11.0	70.4	14.5	51.9	8.3	51.1	10.8
60 - 64	64	90.6	7.7	56.3	14.8	62.5	13.2	54.7	5.4	56.3	10.8
Over 65	32	93.8	8.3	68.8	11.7	68.8	13.8	68.8	10.0	40.6	10.8

1/ Many persons had experience in several of the above categories; therefore, "percentage of the age group" in the various categories is not cumulative to 100% of the age group.

2/ "Average years of this occupation" derived from number reporting years of this work. In many cases when occupation was indicated, the years of this experience was not given.









## CHILD LABOR AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Children in the families of these agricultural workers entering FSA Camps do not attend school in California and Arizona in the same proportion as the children of the same ages in the general population of these states. In 1930, approximately 95 per cent of all children aged six to 12 in California attended school, and 83 per cent of the children aged 13 to 18 were in school. <sup>1/</sup> Only 83 per cent of the six to 12 year old children of these agricultural worker families went to school during the current school term. In sharp contrast with the state figures for 1930, and despite the fact that the school leaving age in California is 18, only 41 per cent, half the state proportion, of the children 13 to 18 in these families were pupils during the current school term.

Only a partial explanation of the low percentage of the age group 13 to 18 who attend school is to be found in the necessity for the earnings of the older children. In the month preceding camp registrations, 18 per cent of the children of these ages worked an average of 7.2 days per worker. Nearly half of this age group were reported by their parents to be actively in the labor market. However, of those children 13 to 18 years of age who were reported by their parents not to be in the labor market, more than half of them were not attending school during the current school term (Table 10).

---

<sup>1/</sup> U. S. Census of Population - 1930.



Table 10.

Children 6-18 Years of Age Members of Families Entering  
F.S.A. Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona  
Classified by School Attendance and by Active  
Participation in the Labor Market.

	:	Children	:	Children
	:	6-12	:	13-18
Total (number)	:	1,986	:	1,635
(percent)	:	100.0	:	100.0
Pupils during current school term	:		:	
(number)	:	1,654	:	662
(percent)	:	83.3	:	40.5
Worked in past 30 days	:	-	:	
(number)	:	5	:	292
(percent)	:	0.3	:	17.9
At present actively engaged in labor market	:		:	
(number)	:	25	:	754
(percent)	:	1.3	:	46.1





### DEPARTURE FROM CAMPS

Many of the families who entered the camps during the first four months of 1940 departed from the camps during this same period. By April 30, 58 per cent of all families who had entered camps since January 1 had left the camps; 86 per cent of the families who had registered in the camps during the first week of January had departed by this date and 80 per cent of those who came in the second week had left by April 30th. The average length of stay for the families entering and departing during this period was 4.4 weeks for the camps in Northern California, 4.7 weeks for camps in the San Joaquin Valley, 4.3 weeks for Arizona camps, but 6.5 weeks for Imperial and Coachella Valley camps. The much longer average stay in the camps in the Imperial and Coachella Valley is surprising when it is remembered that during this period the average camp population in this area declined from 654 families in January to 309 families in April (Table 11).

Approximately 87 per cent of the families leaving camps stated that they expected to find work at their destination. Only a few, however, indicated that they were leaving with certain prospects of work. More than one-fourth stated that they had no definite information of any kind regarding the work they expected to find at their destination.

Three per cent of the families had learned of work from labor contractors; almost a fourth of them had heard of work from friends or neighbors; another 25 per cent of the families were seeking work from



Table 11

Families Entering and Leaving Farm Security Administration  
Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona.  
January - April, 1940.

Week of Registration at Camps	: Number Entering That Week	: Cumulative Number of Families Entering	: Number Departing by Weeks	: Cumulative Number of Departures	: Percentage <sup>1/</sup> All Departures Are of All Admissions.
January 1 - 6	: 58	: 58	:: 2	: 2	: 3.4
7 - 13	: 91	: 149	:: 6	: 8	: 5.4
14 - 20	: 123	: 272	:: 8	: 16	: 5.8
21 - 27	: 88	: 360	:: 14	: 30	: 8.3
Jan. 28 - Feb. 3	: 112	: 472	:: 16	: 46	: 9.7
February 4 - 10	: 87	: 559	:: 21	: 67	: 12.0
11 - 17	: 106	: 665	:: 33	: 100	: 15.0
18 - 24	: 116	: 781	:: 32	: 132	: 16.9
Feb. 25 - Mar. 2	: 180	: 961	:: 45	: 177	: 18.4
March 3 - 9	: 122	: 1,083	:: 72	: 249	: 22.9
10 - 16	: 221	: 1,304	:: 97	: 346	: 26.5
17 - 23	: 253	: 1,557	:: 114	: 460	: 29.5
24 - 30	: 230	: 1,787	:: 152	: 612	: 34.2
Mar. 31 - Apr. 6	: 219	: 2,006	:: 190	: 802	: 39.9
Apr. 7 - 13	: 190	: 2,196	:: 143	: 945	: 43.0
14 - 20	: 171	: 2,367	:: 158	: 1,103	: 46.5
21 - 27	: 178	: 2,545	:: 374	: 1,477	: 58.0
28 - 30	: 103	: 2,648	:: -	: -	: -
	: :	: :	:: :	: :	: :

Average weeks in Camp

All California and Arizona Camps . . . . .	5.1 weeks
Northern California Camps . . . . .	4.4 weeks
San Joaquin Valley Camps . . . . .	4.7 weeks
Imperial and Coachella Valley Camps. . . . .	6.5 weeks
Arizona Camps . . . . .	4.3 weeks

<sup>1/</sup> Based on ratio of cumulative number of departures to cumulative number of admissions.



farmers who had employed them previously; 12 per cent had made direct contacts with employers and were leaving to take work that had been offered; 8 per cent learned of work by correspondence. Less than one per cent of the families were leaving to seek work to which they had been referred by the State Employment Service. (Table 12) More had learned of work through FSA camp managers than through the Employment Service. Although only six families reported leaving the camps to take work to which they had been referred through the State Employment Service, more than 54 per cent of the families reported having members registered with this agency at the time they entered the camps.

There was a marked tendency for the families leaving camps to choose destinations within the county or adjacent counties. However, 30 per cent of the families leaving Arizona camps said they were going to California; 14 per cent leaving Arizona stated they were going to states to the east. Six per cent of the families leaving Imperial and Coachella Valley camps indicated they were going to eastern states, 3 per cent gave Arizona as their destination. Six per cent of those leaving camps in Northern California said they were going to Oregon and Washington.

Of those whose destination was in the San Joaquin Valley, 36 per cent expected to find work in the pea harvest, 16 per cent to work in potato harvest and 11 per cent to do general farm work. Most of the families going to Sacramento Valley counties expected to find work thinning peaches and in the pea fields. For those families whose destination was the Imperial and Coachella Valleys, work in the peas was the most frequently





Table 12

Families Entering and Leaving Farm Security Administration  
Migratory Labor Camps in California and Arizona. January-  
April, 1940, Classified by Source of Information Concerning  
the Work Sought in Places of Destination. <sup>1/</sup>

Source of Information con- cerning work in place of destination	Camp of Registration									
	All Camps		Northern California Camps		San Joaquin Valley Camps		Imperial and Coachella		Arizona Camps	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Total leaving camp	1,477									
Total reporting regarding work information	889	100.0	191	100.0	387	100.0	247	100.0	64	100.0
None	233	26.2	83	27.5	117	30.2	24	9.7	9	14.0
Advertisement	3	0.3	-		1	0.3	1	0.4	1	1.6
Labor Contractor	30	3.4	1	.3	16	4.1	13	5.3		
Word of mouth	210	23.6	31	10.3	92	23.8	73	29.6	14	21.9
Previous work conn.	217	24.4	46	15.2	66	17.0	99	40.1	6	9.4
Employer	105	11.8	13	4.3	65	16.8	20	8.0	7	10.9
FSA Camp Manager	7	.8	4	1.3	1	0.3	2	0.8	-	
State Empl. Service	6	0.7	4	1.3	1	0.3	1	0.4	-	
Correspondence	70	7.8	8	2.6	21	5.4	14	5.7	27	42.2
Private employment service	1	0.1	1	.3	-		-		-	
Other sources	7	0.8			7	1.8				

<sup>1/</sup> Information concerning families leaving camps, January - April, 1940, is available only for those families who entered the camp during this period.





reported. Of all families departing in this period only 5 per cent said they expected to find nonagricultural employment.

The uncertainty of finding work probably is the major reason why 35 per cent of the families stated they expected to live in a roadside camp at their destinations. Only 10 per cent thought they would be in farmers' camps.

While 27 per cent of the families entering FSA camps had come directly from other FSA camps, only 9 per cent of the families leaving the camps in this period expected to reenter FSA camps at their destination--a number slightly less than those who expected to rent houses, or to live in their trailer houses in their places of destination.



1022269528